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ABSTRACT

The Community Education Center of Meade 46-1 School District studied the effectiveness of adult basic education (ABE) programs throughout South Dakota. The study coordinators reviewed and computerized 359 case histories submitted from 23 different programs throughout the state. From this database, numerous conclusions about the ABE delivery system were made. Some of the findings of the study were the following: (1) 303 of the 359 persons completed the General Education Development (GED) tests; (2) 45 percent of those surveyed received employment, greater job security, and better wages; (3) 22 responents went off welfare and into employment; (4) 49 percent went on for further education; (5) more than half of the respondents increased their incomes; and (6) respondents were enthusiastic about the programs and the positive impact they had on their lives. Recommendations were made for further followup studies to document the beneficial impact of ABE programs in South Dakota. (KC)

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ED264396

Summary Report
"COMPUTER BASED MODEL FOR ABE STUDENT FOLLOWUP"

July 1, 1984
through
June 30, 1985

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Gathering information for this project by local programs in South Dakota was not an easy task...this project is dedicated to the professionalism exhibited by the participating entities who submitted data and took the time to do the task well...so that the information contained within is accurate and relevant to the many years Adult Basic Education has been serving people in our state...you are to be commended!

Special recognition is given Mr. Dirl Steffe who developed from scratch the data base model used to store and analyze the information received. It has worked very well and we are grateful to him for making our computer most literate.

The project would not be final without saying many thanks to the secretarial personnel in the Community Education office who so aptly kept us in communication with local programs.

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PART I - OVERVIEW

It has long been recognized that any program worth involving the human factor is directly related to the results obtained by the students within and how they benefited from it. This study gets at the heart of the human factor. The need was recognized to find out how Adult Basic Education has changed the course of life for the people it has served in South Dakota, thus indicating the worthiness of the program.

The Community Education Center of Meade 46-1 School District was granted the opportunity to make this special study during 1984-85. The data received during this period of time involves 359 individual cases from twenty three different programs in our state. A total of twenty eight local programs were invited to participate in order to obtain the estimated 400 participants desired. Five of the twenty eight were unable to respond for some reason or another. We have found the 359 cases reported definitely give us a very sound data base on which to draw numerous conclusions about the Adult Basic Education delivery system through its local programs. Moreover and ultimately most important, this data base reflects in a very explicit and open manner just how these students have benefited from the program. Thus many projections can ultimately be given about the impact the program has had through employment, further education, program recruiting and self-image, plus numerous other demographic data, such as age, ethnic profile, etc.

We will in this report submit data that addresses the impact Adult Basic Education is having with the people in our state using it. There appears to be no reason why this style of follow-up and the process as projected in the next section cannot be used anywhere in the country.

PART II - PROCESS OF FOLLOWUP

The fundamental objective in developing a method or process by which followup can be done on an individual basis is involved with the major concern of gathering unbiased, accurate data. As considerations were given in the development of the system used herein, several major considerations were taken into account. One of these considerations involved getting individual data freely and openly from the people being surveyed. One must also, because of time constraints at the local level, design the collection instrument to be easy to use and not lengthy in nature. A third aspect to be instilled in such an undertaking is built-in privacy for the individuals being asked to give information.

After making all local programs aware of the project, we prepared through many hours of discussion a local interview or written response form, a local program case information summary data form for Adult Basic Education student followup, and concise directions for gathering the data.

When the items that were to be gathered from the individual were determined, they were then placed in a logical sequence for integration into the data base computer program. (Copies of these forms and communications may be found in the supplementary information.) Then it was established how many individuals should be surveyed by each local program on the basis of the size of the program and the length of time it had been in operation. These sizes ranged from 5 to 50. We then assembled a packet of survey materials for each of the twenty eight programs invited to participate. In each packet were enough individual interview or written response forms for each individual to be surveyed by a local director, several case information summary data sheets, and a self-addressed stamped envelope to return the local summary. Our office requested only the local summary sheet. The individual data forms could be disposed of at the local level. Case numbers and program identification criteria were all that we requested. This was done to protect the privacy of the individual submitting the information.

As the local program summaries came into our center, they were immediately programmed into the data base we had developed. A management control chart was kept for immediate identification of programs participating and not participating. The data base computer program paralleled precisely the case information summary data from each local program; thus we have on file a profile of each local program that participated and a total profile of all local program information received. We could then at any time, or at this point in time, for that matter, update and ask for any or all of the criteria concerned. Several encouragement communications were sent to local programs, and as we received their information, it was immediately recognized.

After the filing of our final report this fall, we will then prepare and disseminate some 200 copies of this report. The preliminary findings as indicated in this written study were reviewed constantly during the process with the State Director of Adult Basic Education in Pierre. Mr. Gene Dickson sent many items of back-up information to assist the program effort. On-site visitations made during the project and in our conferences during that time and by phone, we discussed the many ramifications this study could have, and we made every effort to select that data pertinent to reflect a true picture of Adult Basic Education in our state through the eyes of those who have been in the program.

PART III - SOME FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Of the 359 individuals from which followup data was collected, 148 were male and 211 female.

A. Age Groupings

1. 17-20 23%
2. 21-25 21%
3. 26-30 13%
4. 31-40 21%
5. 41-50 13%
6. 51 and over 9%

Ages ranged from 17 through 72 years of age.

B. Ethnic Profile

1. American Indian 84
2. Asian 12
3. Black 4
4. Hispanic 10
5. White 249

C. Entered the program for other than personal satisfaction;

234 of the 359 respondents entered the program because there was a definite need to obtain this education for matters other than personal satisfaction. This does not preclude that personal satisfaction was not a factor in all the cases but merely establishes an identity for direct need.

D. Completed the GED?

303 of the total number completed the GED

E. Employed prior to GED?

1. yes - 176
2. no - 183

F. Presently employed as?

The responses here were so numerous in terms of type of employment that they are listed in the supplementary information. It is amazing the variety of jobs these people were presently employed in. Seventy four of the total number indicated they were unemployed, but this group includes homemakers, retirees, students, etc., as well.

G. Benefits

1. Because of being in this program and completing the GED or upgrading their education level, 162, or 45% of those surveyed, received employment of some kind and indicated greater job security and better wages as well.
2. Twenty two respondents went off of welfare and into employment, representing 6% of the total.

H. Did you go for further education?

49% indicated they did go on for further education

I. Type of education

1. Vocational - 44%
2. Higher education - 45%
3. Technical education - 10%
4. Military - 1%

J. Did your income increase because of Adult Basic Education?

1. yes - 190
2. no - 169

This factor alone has significant economic impact to local and state economy.

K. How did you learn about Adult Basic Education?

1. School - 22%
2. Family relationship - 16%
3. Friends - 27%
4. Media - 22%
5. Numerous other entities - 13%

These entities include Job Service, YFC, United Sioux Tribes, tutor recruitment programs, military, various employers, colleges, VA, and work supervisors.

L. When all 359 respondents were placed into state employment categories, the following data was indicated:

1. Managers and officials - 13
2. Professional workers - 21
3. Technical workers - 37
4. Sales workers - 29
5. Clerical workers - 20
6. Service workers - 68
7. Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries - 9
8. Craft/kindred workers - 23
9. Operators, helpers, laborers - 33
10. Unemployed(Housewives,students,retired)- 106

M. Those forty seven cases who were aged 17, 18, and 19 who went on for further education chose types of education as follows:

1. Vocational - 55%
2. Higher Education - 39%
3. Technical - 0
4. Military 6%

A number of local programs where the surveys were done specifically asked their students for comments above and beyond the data requested. Comments received included the following:

- Program was absolutely helpful, gave confidence
- Great achievement for someone who hadn't liked regular school - now has a career, not just a job, advanced quickly.
- You really helped me, glad to answer the survey.
- Learned more in a shorter time than regular school. I couldn't be where I am if I hadn't been there.
- I hope that's something they never take out.
- Excited about new job. It all started there (in Adult Basic Education Learning Center).
- Wages doubled plus great job satisfaction - assists husband in his business, also (dental lab). Numerous professional opportunities
- Appreciated the flexibility of Adult Basic Education program - great for personal schedule.
- Definite benefits - job enhancement
- Liked convenience of flexible schedule (day and night). Individualized approach was great, much better wages.
- Brought self and four kids out of poverty- happy about program, definitiely helpful.
- Couldn't have done it without your help, liked individual approach, you don't feel stupid when you ask questions in an individualized program.
- I feel good about myself, gained confidence, now I did it, enjoyed it, like the one-on-one.
- Needed the GED for my new job, happy I did it, enjoyed it.
- Anybody who wants to visit with me about the program, I'll certainly give references. Most impressive thing I ever went through.
- Thrilled about success.
- Best feeling I had about myself in a long time. Wanted to be a model for my children.

PART IV - RECOMMENDATIONS

After a comprehensive review of the information received, some specific recommendations can be made ... included are the following:

A. Further data for analysis should be gathered for a second year to solidify the impact data discovered in 84-85. At the same time, greater in-depth dissemination could be done to encourage local programs to keep a consistent follow-up as organized in this study for future input to the State Department.

B. This data base process expressed in the project should be established at the state level after the second year of study, specifically for retrieval of information as needed for presentation to state and federal legislative branches. It has possibilities to impact national thinking about Adult Basic Education for many kinds of justification needs, regarding funds, program base, etc.

C. The information received in this study or any subsequent study from this data base should be made available to public information agencies to make the public aware of what improvement of basic educational skills can mean, not only to the student involved but also to the betterment of our country at large in an economic sense, in family relations, in the individual worth of the human being, etc.

D. The data base used should be improved to quickly analyze responses specifically and inherent to each ethnic group represented, so that problems contained within these groups can be clearly identified and hopefully solutions obtained.

PART V - CONCLUSION

The Adult Basic Education program in South Dakota is having an impact on the lives of our people. When one considers the 359 individuals, basic information will hold up statistically over the many thousands who have been served by this program in our state since 1967. The economic impact will extrapolate into many millions of dollars. This return into the economy is vital. The Adult Basic Education program throughout the state has experienced and will continue to experience a positive acceptance by the public. The basic worth of this acceptance is just how much it helps the individual who needs it.

We must pursue this data base on a revised entity in the future in order to document program effectiveness.

PART VI

SUPPLEMENTARY

INFORMATION

1. Letter of Directions
2. Interview or Written Response Form
3. Case Information Summary Form
4. Types of Employment

you can

COMMUNITY EDUCATION NEWS

Community Education Center, Meade 46-1 • 1230 Douglas Street, Sturgis, SD 57785 • 347-4454

"A PROGRAM DEDICATED TO ENRICHING THE LIVES OF ALL THROUGH LIFELONG LEARNING"

March 1, 1985

RE: "COMPUTER BASED MODEL for ABE STUDENT FOLLOW-UP"

Enclosed are the instruments for recording the data we are requesting. With each local program in South Dakota assigned cases in proportion to people served...we should have an excellent base on which worth and impact of the statewide ABE Program may be clearly stated.

DIRECTIONS

1. Interviews may be made by phone, person to person, by mail or in some cases, use of accurate files. People from which you gather information must have separated from the program. PLEASE REMEMBER this project is specifically oriented to followup information. ACCURACY IS VITAL!!
   A. Use the goldenrod colored local interview sheet to gather the individual information. Then, you may file this sheet with the persons individual folder after recording the data on the case information summary for your program. Only the local program will know who was interviewed.
2. Summary Data forms are furnished in your packets:
   A. The form(s) marked "Final" will be forwarded to our center with completed data. Use the stamped, self-addressed envelop to return your information.
   B. Other copies of the summary data are for your convenience as work sheets.
   C. Should you have individual comments of successes, etc., key to your case number and place on back of your summary data sheets.
3. Deadline for you to return the information requested is May 1, 1985.
4. Results will be published and disseminated by August 1, 1985.

If I can be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to call our Community Education Center at 1-605-347-4454.

Sincerely,

George W. DeBow
Project Coordinator

INTERVIEW OR WRITTEN RESPONSE FORM (LOCAL)

CASE NUMBER _____

1. Sex ☐ Male ☐ Female
2. Age at time of completion. _____
3. Ethnic profile. ☐ American Indian ☐ Black
   ☐ Asian ☐ Hisp. ☐ White
4. Did you enter program for other than personal satisfaction?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. GED completed? ☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Employed prior to program entry? ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. Presently employed as _____
8. Program benefits received. ☐ Employment
   ☐ Job Security
   ☐ Better Wages
   ☐ Off Welfare
9. Did you go for further education? ☐ Yes ☐ No
10. Type of education. ☐ Vocational ☐ Higher Education
    ☐ Technical ☐ Military
11. Did your income increase as a result of Adult Basic Education?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No
12. How did you learn about Adult Basic Education?
    ☐ School ☐ Family ☐ Friend ☐ Media
    ☐ Other

PROGRAM _____

CASE INFORMATION SUMMARY DATA
FOR
ABE STUDENT FOLLOWUP

ase No.	Sex M/F	Age at Time of Completion	Ethnic Profile AI	Asian	BL	Hisp	W	Did you enter Program for other than Pers. Satisfaction? Yes	No	GED Completed Yes	No	Employed prior to Prog. Entry Yes	No	Presently employed as	Program Benefits Received Empl	Job Sec.	Better Wages	Off Welfare	Did you go for further ed Yes	No	Type of Ed Voc	H.E.	Tech	Mil	Did your income increase as a result of ABE? Yes	No	How Did You Learn About ABE? Sch	Fee	Friend	Media	Other (Identify)

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TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT

Presently Employed as:

Waitress - 9
Farmer - 4
Factory - 15
Nurse's Aide - 10
Building Maintenance - 8
Dishwasher - 2
Laborer - 11
Retired - 7
Nurse - 12
Military - 7
Logger - 3
Cook - 9
Jailer - 2
Medical Assistant - 2
Post Office - 1
Rancher - 1
Technician - 3
Trucker - 2
Clerk - 18
Hair Stylist - 3
Office Work - 7
Railroad - 1
Bakery - 1
Mechanic - 8
Bookkeeper - 5
Police - 4
Teacher - 7
Tutor - 5
Social Work - 3
Bus Driver - 4

Dorm Supervisor - 1
Library - 2
Self-employed - 5
Student - 25
Accountant - 2
Store Manager - 2
Salvage - 1
Water Plant - 3
Personnel - 1
Utilities - 1
Fireman - 1
Physical Therapist - 1
Child Care - 4
Construction - 1
Electrician - 4
Elderly Care - 4
Agric. Specialist - 1
Job Corps - 4
Program Director - 3
Busboy - 1
Stockboy - 1
Counselor - 2
Trainer - 1
Maid - 1
Real Estate - 1
Station Attendant - 1
Management - 6
Warehouse - 2
Jewelry Maker - 1
Heavy Equipment - 1

Ceramics - 2
City Water - 1
Miner - 2
Plumber - 1
Welder - 1
Cosmetologist - 1
Paramedic - 1
Manager,Mobile Homes - 1
Meat Inspector - 1
Researcher - 1
Treasurer - 1
Paralegal - 1
Computer Operator - 2
Painter - 2
Insurance - 1
Draftsman - 1
Salesman - 1
Housewife - 6
Moved - 1
Unemployed - 74